



Ecological Sustainability - Social Justice - Peace and Non-violence - Grassroots Democracy

LETTER TO THE PIRATE PARTY AUSTRALIA 2013 FEDERAL ELECTION

The Pirate Party has requested any message or offer with regard to preference arrangements for the federal election. The Australian Greens request that the Pirate Party Australia direct preferences to Australian Greens candidates ahead of the Australian Labor Party, the Liberal Party of Australia and all other parties in Senate seats in all States & Territories and in the lower house electorate of Melbourne.

The Australian Greens have a publicly available policy platform which can be viewed here: <http://greens.org.au/>

Below we have collated aspects of our policies which overlap with the Pirate Party Australia's Policy Platform. As the federal election campaign continues, the Australian Greens will release more policy initiatives you can keep in touch with our announcements here: <http://greens.org.au/>

Copyright

Australian copyright law is stranded in the 20th century and urgently needs reform – the Greens have proposed a set of measures to protect Australians from IT price gouging, to widen the availability of products for the visually impaired, and widen exceptions for “fair use” of creative works, as is the case in the United States.

In June 2013, the Greens tabled a bill on Copyright Reform which sought to remove obstacles for blind and visually impaired Australians accessing works in Braille, audio and large print formats, introduces a fair use defence, removes geocodes and provides a safe harbour for Australian libraries and universities. The Pirate Party issued a press release welcoming this: <http://pirateparty.org.au/2013/06/27/pirate-party-supports-greens-fair-go-for-fair-use-bill/>

The Greens and the Pirate Party shared a position against SOPA, PIPA and ACTA, campaigns that succeeded in part due to solidarity among organisations, corporations and parties willing to acknowledge principles that are fundamental to both of our parties.

Patents

The Australian Greens believe that living organisms such as plants, animals and micro-organisms are not inventions. Patents on life are unethical and against the public interest.

We are also supportive of various ways to increase the usage of generic medicines. This includes taking action against abuse of our patent system to extend protections on medicines – evergreening – and taking action in court to recover costs to the

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Commonwealth where evergreening has unfairly delayed the introduction of a generic medicine.

Privacy Rights

The Australian Greens were key to the campaign to defeat the mandatory internet filter and helped defer dangerous data-retention proposals, it is more important than ever to protect online privacy and civil liberties against the surveillance and censorship proposals which are eroding the potential of the internet.

The Greens are active across the country on national days of action such as the 6 July PRISMbreak / pro-privacy demonstrations.

The Australian Greens believe that if a data breach occurs, the victim of that breach must be notified in order to minimise the harm caused and to restore the individual's control over their personal information. The Greens also believe that all organisations which collect personal data must be transparent in their handling of data breaches and that mandatory notification scheme should be enforced so that non-compliance would be judged as an "interference with privacy" which would enable the individual who has suffered the breach and lack of notification to take remedial action if necessary.

The Australian Greens believe that privacy intrusive behaviour of social media services should be regulated to protect the individual's privacy. Senator Ludlam objected to Google reading users email transactions in order to sell targeted advertising displayed alongside individuals Gmail accounts during the 2011 Greens-led inquiry into online privacy.

Just as warrants are required to enter your house, warrants should be required to access private information collected via computer networks and mobile phones. Australian law enforcement and intelligence agencies, local governments and a wide variety of other agencies are accessing vast amounts of private data without a warrant. This information includes data about telephone calls that you have made, emails you have sent, information that you have accessed online, and detailed information about the location of your mobile telephone.

The Greens' Telecommunications Amendment (Get A Warrant) Bill returns us to the normal warrant procedures which have served us well for decades.

Reform of democratic institutions (whistleblowers, FOI, political donations, electoral participation, petitions)

On similar core business regarding transparency, accountability and freedom of information and the press, we have also both defended the Wikileaks publishing organisation and Julian Assange.

Whistleblowers

In June, Leader of the Australian Greens Senator Milne, successfully amended the Government's whistleblower laws to ensure that our environment will be protected. Under the original scheme, someone raising concerns about a threat to the environment would be forced to wait for over 100 days before they could take their concerns to the media. Now they can disclose wrongdoing or regulatory failures immediately. We also moved to amend the bill to include Ministers, Speaker, President, MPs and staff employed under the Members of Parliament Staff Act 1984 in the scheme; allow external disclosures where it would not disclose information or conduct which is likely to pose a risk to national security; allow the Minister to be able to exercise a general, non-compulsive power to make ex gratia payments to a discloser where the public interest warrants it; and ensure the Ombudsman could investigate the way an agency has treated their employee after coming forward with claims of wrongdoing.

Freedom of Information

The Greens believe that open and transparent government is a prerequisite to an effective democracy. Information is central to knowing how our elected representatives are exercising their power and to hold our representatives to account.

The Greens, and in particular former Australian Greens leader Senator Bob Brown, have been long term advocates of freedom of information reform. Greens Senator Scott Ludlam has run a spirited campaign to include intelligence agencies within the scope of FOI legislation. He also successfully amended the National Broadband Network legislation to allow freedom of information requests to be made of the company running the network.

Ideally government agencies should be making more information publicly available as a matter of course. There is widespread community support for broad FOI laws that ensure accountability and transparency of government.

It is the policy of the Australian Greens that the current exemption granted to intelligence agencies from FOI legislation be repealed. In June, the old parties rejected a Greens amendment to define what information is subject to FOI, including salaries for MPs, electorate allowances, superannuation and services and facilities to support parliamentarians.

Electoral Participation

The Australian Greens opposed recent changes to the Electoral Act which doubled the cost of the nomination fee for contesting elections. We believe the risk to democracy of increasing the nomination fee and number of nominators outweighs the inconvenience of accommodating more players on the ballot box.

The Australian Greens agree that there should be prompt, comprehensive public disclosure of political donations and funding on a public website.

<http://greens.org.au/policies/community-participation>

<http://greens.org.au/policies/constitutional-reform-and-democracy>

Digital Liberties (net neutrality, data retention, censorship)

The Greens and the Pirate Party were among many who opposed the Rudd/Conroy internet filter. Using the access that parliament provided, the Greens took the challenge and arguments directly to Senator Conroy during Senate Estimates, Question Time and extracted useful information through Questions on Notice that campaigners used well in public education and media outreach.

In February 2013, Greens Senator Scott Ludlam tabled a petition by the Pirate Party on proposed changes to national security laws, including retention of data on Australians for up to two years. The Greens and the Pirate Party issued a joint press release on this occasion: <http://scott-ludlam.greensmps.org.au/content/media-releases/data-retention-goes-back-underground-campaign-turns-heat>

Both Parties concur that the struggle against data retention is delayed and not yet won. While its ultimate defeat will again require collaborative approaches, efforts undertaken to highlight the human rights and civil liberties implications of the inquiry of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence and Security have created the coalitions and awareness required for an ultimately successful campaign on the joint goal of preventing data retention.

The Australian Greens believe that the regulation of the Internet must be transparent, accountable and protective of privacy, freedom of speech and access to information. There is a fine line between ensuring cyber security and the regulation of illegal or dangerous content and jeopardising civil liberties and human rights - both online freedom and online security must be balanced carefully, otherwise both will be jeopardised.

The Australian Greens strenuously opposed the internet filter proposed by the government in 2010, rejected the scheme because it not only failed to protect children online but would also infringe upon all citizens' right to privacy, setting a dangerous precedent for possible future internet censorship in Australia. The Australian Greens also definitively reject the data retention proposal for similar reasons.

Although the Greens acknowledge the need to allow intelligence and policing agencies to use data and communication interception methods if an individual is implicated in a crime and there is a warrant to do so, we do not condone the mandatory data retention of all citizens for up to two years, which would treat all Australians like suspects, not citizens. This approach of treating citizens as guilty until proven innocent reflects a broader militarisation of the internet which began after the 2001 September 11 attacks. The Greens believe that it is vital that Australia does not follow America's lead of continuously reducing civil liberties and the privacy of their citizens in the name of national security.

In February this year Media and Communications spokesperson for the Greens, Senator Scott Ludlam, brought to the attention of the Senate that of the 5,463 submissions to the

National Security Inquiry, 98.9% of submissions were decisively against the data retention proposal. Senator Ludlam also presented to the Senate a petition of 1447 signatures demanding the abandonment of the data retention scheme, and called on the government to heed the public's serious concerns about the proposal.

In June 2013, Senator Ludlam introduced a Private Senators Bill, the Telecommunications Amendment (Get A Warrant) Bill 2013 that would return Australian law enforcement and intelligence agencies to normal warrant procedures before accessing a person's private data. The Australian people have a right to know the extent to which their Government has pursued a scheme for universal round-the-clock monitoring of our communications.

Support for Fibre-to-the-Premises Infrastructure Projects

The Australian Greens have confirmed their support for NBNCo remaining a publicly-owned fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) network, and urged the Opposition to reconsider its proposal to leave up to nine million households and businesses stranded on an obsolete copper network.

As Australia transitions away from an economy based on resource-depletion, the Greens believe telecommunications will play an increasingly vital role. We will ensure these issues stay at the forefront in the run to the election, so that the risks of #fraudband remains uppermost in people's minds.

<http://scott-ludlam.greensmps.org.au/content/media-releases/stay-course-nbn-greens>

Bill of Rights

The Australian Greens policy is to progress an Australian bill of rights and incorporate Australia's international human rights obligations into domestic law

Australia is one of the few countries in the world without basic rights protected in the Constitution. This means fundamental human rights like our freedom of speech, the right to a fair trial and protection from arbitrary imprisonment risk being trampled on.

Enshrining a bill of rights in our Constitution would be a watershed in Australian history and would be an enormous step forward for democracy and progress.

We note that the Government has committed to reviewing the Australian Human Rights Framework in 2014 and urge that the terms of reference of this review include consideration of a Human Rights Act.

<http://greens.org.au/policies/human-rights>

Tax

The Australian Greens believe in a global economic system that promotes environmental sustainability, human rights and a decent standard of living for all.

It is our policy for the global implementation of an international financial transactions tax (Tobin Tax) to discourage global currency speculation and to provide an independent revenue base to address global issues such as climate change and poverty alleviation.

Welfare

The Australian Greens have the guts to be the voice of Australia's poorest families. Our plan for a caring Australia puts the needs of people in poverty ahead of billionaire mining companies. The Greens plan to raise Newstart, reversing cuts to Parenting Payment, and reduce pressure on our most vulnerable families.

- A \$50 per week increase to the single rate of Newstart and the Youth Allowance single living away from home rate;
- Additional \$40 per week supplement for all single parents on Newstart, which together with the \$50 increase to Newstart reverses the impact of the parenting payment cuts and will immediately help lift single parents out of poverty;
- Better indexation of all allowance payments that reflects the changes to the cost of living for these households;
- A higher income free threshold for single parents that allows them to earn the same as they did on Parenting Payment Single; and
- Better job services for everyone that help people into suitable, secure work and an enforceable right to ask for flexible working conditions, for single parents and carers.

Energy (renewable energy grid, CSG)

The Greens have an ambitious and achievable vision of Australia powered 100% by renewable energy – and the policies to get us there while keeping power prices affordable. We are proud to have delivered, through negotiations for the Clean Energy Future package, record-breaking investments of \$13.2 billion in renewable energy, governed by statutory independent boards, and over \$1 billion to help householders, small businesses and communities groups to save energy and money.

Abolishing fossil fuel subsidies: In this critical decade of global warming, why are we shovelling more money into fossil fuel companies to make it cheaper to pollute? These billions of dollars are fuelling global warming by helping big mining corporations pay their fuel bills and get special tax treatment for exploration to pay for more fossil fuels.

<http://christine-milne.greensmps.org.au/portfolios/climate-change>

<http://christine-milne.greensmps.org.au/portfolios/resources-energy>

<http://christine-milne.greensmps.org.au/content/media-releases/greens-end-13-billion-fossil-fuel-subsidies-big-mining-companies>

The Greens are standing with the community, opposing the rapid expansion of coal seam gas.

It is not the time to set up another fossil fuel industry as the fossil fuel era comes to an end. Australia needs to focus on transitioning to renewable energy and away from emissions-intensive, environmentally destructive fossil fuels like coal seam gas.

Only the Australian Greens are prepared to stand up to the big coal and CSG mining companies and act to protect our climate, precious farmland and regional communities.

The Greens are fighting for:

- no new coal or CSG approvals;
- the right for farmers and other landholders to say NO to coal and CSG on their land;
- no new coal or gas ports along the Great Barrier Reef;
- protection of our precious water resources including the Murray-Darling and Great Artesian Basins from overuse or contamination by coal and coal seam gas mining;
- independent measurement of methane emissions from CSG so we can understand how polluting CSG really is; and
- stronger environmental laws to better protect our natural environment.

Despite the lack of information about long-term impacts of CSG, Australian farmers still have no right to say no to CSG mining on their land. The Greens have introduced a bill to allow farmers to choose if they want to allow CSG on their property.

The Greens have also introduced a bill to protect water from CSG mining, which would empower the Environment Minister to consider impacts of mining on water when deciding on whether to approve projects under our national environmental laws.

<http://larissa-waters.greensmps.org.au/coal-seam-gas>

Marriage

Australia is ready for marriage equality. The community understands that it's an issue of basic fairness. The Greens have listened to the community, right from the start, and we've acted. Now, Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott are standing in the way.

Senator Sarah Hanson-Young, and MP for Melbourne Adam Bandt, have Bills before Parliament that would remove discrimination from the Marriage Act and give same-sex couples the right to marry. If Parliament votes for our Bills, Australia will join countries like Canada, Sweden and South Africa in recognising same-sex marriage.

<http://greensmps.org.au/marriage>

Drugs

The Greens approach to drugs policy is one of harm minimisation. From a public health perspective, the current approach to illicit drugs is a total failure. There is also much work left to be done around alcohol policy in this country. Based on the best evidence, the Greens' policies go a long way to reduce the harms caused by alcohol and other drugs in Australia

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Foreign Policy

The Australian Greens support transparency in international treaty or trade agreement negotiations.

The Greens believe foreign policy should facilitate peaceful relations between countries, increase Australia's friendships and standing as a middle power and uphold the framework of international law, of which a key element is human rights. Regionally, Australia should help our near neighbours create healthy, educated, ecologically sustainable and democratic societies.

Only the Greens have the integrity and conviction to stand up for an independent foreign policy. Australia, as a wealthy nation, should provide care and support for less developed countries, particularly in our region, and contribute our "fair share" to poverty alleviation and long-term ecologically sustainable development.

The Greens want an independent Australian foreign policy that creates relationships with the rest of the world based on mutual respect. We recognise many of our major challenges will not be solved without unprecedented global cooperation between governments. Australia should act as a responsible global citizen, pursuing a legitimate national interest, not an excessively competitive or unilateral one that is indifferent to global concerns and interests.

The Australian Greens plan includes:

- increasing Australia's aid contribution to 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2020, and ensuring we reach the target of 0.5% by 2015 as Labor originally promised. An additional investment of \$4.9 billion over the forward estimates will ensure Australia lives up to its commitment to the United Nations Millenium Development Goals and reduce global poverty
- spending aid money effectively to alleviate poverty and enhance self-reliance, not diverting it to military needs or the detention of refugees
- using Australia's two-year Security Council seat and presidency of the G20 (beginning in 2014) to reassert our nation's role as a constructive and independent player in the international community
- introducing new laws to ensure the power to declare war and deploy armed forces does not rest only with the executive of the government of the day. The Greens' Defence Amendment Bill would require parliamentary approval when such a grave decision is made. The bill provides for emergency deployment of armed personnel when Parliament is not sitting
- better scrutiny of Free Trade agreements. The Greens are very concerned about the Trans-Pacific Free Trade Agreement currently under negotiation and its potential impact on access to medicines, local content media rules, high-tech innovation and

limitations placed on governments to make policies and regulations on health, food standards, safety and economic stability. The Greens recently secured greater scrutiny of free-trade agreements, with the government now required to release the priorities and objectives of any proposed agreements, including independent analysis of the anticipated costs and benefits

<http://greens.org.au/policies/global-economics>

23 July 2013